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Duxbury Clipper

Schools Adopt Expansion Plan

By JANE LANE

With the unanimous adoption of a plan presented by the superintendent, the school committee will now push forward in its quest to expand school facilities.

In short order the school committee last week adopted a master facilities plan presented by Supt. Eileen Williams. That plan includes construction of an early childhood center along with a "connecting" structure between Alden and the Middle school to house a 1,000-seat performing arts auditorium. Renovations are also planned at Chandler, Alden and DMS.

Six members of a school building committee were appointed at last week's meeting. The new committee, according to Supt. Williams, is charged with "assuring that the facilities are built to our educational specifications in the most cost effective manner." Committee members are: Paul Arsenian, a member of the town's ad hoc building committee and the finance committee; Paul Brogna, a member of the finance advisory committee and a professional engineer; Jack Canty, a member of the senior center building committee and an engineer; Neil Johnson, school committee member and an engineer, with expertise in capital planning; Dennis Nolan, a member of the senior center building committee member and an architect; and John Tuffy, a selectman and former member of the finance committee. Supt. Williams and Asst. Supt. Micky McGonagle will serve as ex-officio members.

According to the estimated timetable, a special town meeting may be scheduled for late spring/early summer to request money for the design of conceptual plans. If that article is successful, the school department will hire an architect sometime this summer to prepare the drawings. After all cost estimates and drawings are completed, voters will be asked to

finance construction of the approved plans. There is no cost estimate attached to the school project, however, it is expected that Duxbury will be eligible to receive 67 percent reimbursement from the state.

The school principals will head up a second committee which will gather input from faculty and parents regarding specific educational needs within Chandler, Alden and DMS. Building-specific issues such as adequate storage and computer needs will be addressed by the sub committees with a completion date of June.

Under the master facilities plan unveiled last month by Supt. Williams, the early childhood center to be built on Chandler School property will include nine classrooms for the Magic Dragon program, four classrooms for the extended day program, three preschool classrooms and 12 classrooms for a proposed full-day Kindergarten program. Renovations are planned for the Chandler School to accommodate 26 classrooms for grades one and two. A building addition is proposed between Alden and DMS for a 1,000-seat performing arts center and to facilitate sharing of space between the two buildings. An addition is also planned for Alden so that school will be able to accommodate 24 classrooms, a health clinic area, two technology centers and three classrooms for the extended day program. Renovations are also planned for DMS.

In other business last week, the school committee gave Supt. Williams superior marks in her annual evaluation. The superintendent received a mark of "notable strength" in all seven categories of the evaluation: effective instructional leadership, effective organizational leadership, effective administration and management, promotion of equity and appreciation of diversity, effective relationships with the community, fulfillment of professional responsibilities and leadership for education reform and the strategic plan.

Committee chairman Ken McCarthy noted that earlier in the day Supt. Williams had visited with third grade students in Mrs. Marrone's class. Following that visit the students wrote a letter to the school committee asking the members "to please give Dr. Williams a good report card. She works hard and has lots of good ideas. She does a very good job. That is why we think she should get a great report card."

McCarthy noted for the record that the superintendent did, in fact, receive a great report card from the school committee.

"What we accomplish here is a question of teamwork," Supt. Williams stated, "by administrators, teachers, parents and the community. Whatever success I have is everyone's success."